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ABSTRACT

This study is designed to compare "traditional" and "immersion" methods of language instruction to determine whether the latter is a viable alternative in four-year, secondary-school language programs. Both methods are evaluated on the basis of student achievement in comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing skills in Spanish. The hypothesis tested--that the experimental group in Spanish immersion would achieve better in second language acquisition--is supported by all objective and subjective data. The report includes an introduction, objectives, procedure, results, conclusions, recommendations, and a bibliography. Tables of statistical data on student achievement are included. (RL)

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MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF IMMERSION-TYPE TEACHING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS VERSUS THE TRADITIONAL TEACHING EXISTENT TODAY

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June, 1972

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MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF IMMERSION-TYPE TEACHING
IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS VERSUS
THE TRADITIONAL TEACHING EXISTENT TODAY

I

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVES

Is an immersion program of language instruction a viable alternative to the traditional four year course method of modern language instruction? This study was designed to compare the traditional and immersion methods of instruction; both methods were evaluated on the basis of student learning of comprehension, speaking, reading and writing skills in Spanish, while at the same time the advisability of establishing immersion institutes at the secondary level for modern language instruction was assessed.

PROCEDURE

Students in a Chicago girls school entered a one-semester immersion program in Spanish. Their scores in comprehension, speaking, reading and writing and conversational with native professionals were compared with those of students in a traditional Spanish course, and are hereby submitted.

THE PROBLEM

Background: Past efforts to improve modern language instruction have concentrated on a linear extension of the amount of instruction by adding additional semester hours to language requirements. At the secondary level, for example, four years of a language is currently recommended (Conant, 1959). The traditional course of study which requires daily instruction in a language for one class period per day, or its hourly equivalent per week with flexible scheduling, has not been demonstrated to be an effective means of instruction. As David Dougherty (1971) points out,

> After four years in the study of French, the student was often still unable to read a French newspaper and would have been paralyzed if confronted by a real Frenchman. (p. 22)

While modern language programs are costly in terms of personnel and equipment, they are generally ineffective when taught in the traditional manner. This ineffectiveness is attributed to the inefficiency of single class periods.

In an effort to improve modern language instruction, teachers have looked to successful instruction programs that could be adapted to secondary education. One such program is the Army Specialized Training Program. Several principles which could be applied at the secondary level which are used in this program are:

1. The student experiences a large number of instructional hours in a relatively short time period.
2. There are small classes.
3. Language structure is presented in combination with conversational practice.
4. Linguistic habits are formed through drill.
5. Native language informants are employed.
6. A specific objective command of the language is sought.

The application of these principles produced a flexible knowledge of the language with an emphasis on communication skills, particularly conversation.

Statement of Current Problem: This study has compared language instruction in an immersion program designed for the secondary school with instruction using the traditional four-year course sequence in Spanish.

Significance: The study provides comparative data on the effectiveness of two methods of language instruction. Since alternative means of language instruction are being sought by modern language teachers and since the immersion type of instruction is under consideration by many professional organizations, data of this type is presented as an evaluation of immersion as an alternative method.

RELATED RESEARCH

Although an immersion program patterned after that used by the Army Specialized Training Program has not been used in the secondary schools, support for such a program was found in both modern language journals and within professional organizations. The most common proposal for adapting the immersion program to the secondary school level was the possible establishment of institutes for secondary school students which would offer a total immersion experience.

Such a proposal was outlined by R. Baird Shuman (1971). Students wishing to learn a foreign language would be able to apply at any time during their secondary school career. Students would spend one-semester at the institute. This experience would provide more contact hours than are currently provided during the traditional four-year language course sequence. The total immersion program proved more efficient and effective than the traditional program.

An institute of this type has been requested by French teachers in New York City. Eleven hundred teachers, members of the Metropolitan Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of French have sent a petition to Mayor Lindsay in support of an immersion institute.[1]

Research was needed at the secondary level to determine the comparative value of an immersion experience as a method of modern language instruction. This study presents the needed research.

OBJECTIVES

This study addressed the problem: What are the effects of an immersion program of language instruction on the understanding, speaking, reading and writing knowledge of Spanish? To this purpose, the following research hypothesis was advanced.

> An immersion program of language instruction will produce a greater understanding, speaking, reading and writing knowledge of Spanish than the traditional four-course sequence for secondary school students.

The immersion used in the study is described as follows:

1. Classes were held five days per week, six hours per day.

2. Classes were small. Conversation classes did not exceed five in number.

3. Language structure was presented in combination with conversational practice.

4. An emphasis was placed on the formation of linguistic habits.

5. Native professionals conducted the conversation classes.

6. The specific objective was to teach students to communicate in the Spanish language.

PROCEDURE

General Design: Fifteen student volunteers who had completed a minimum of two semesters of high school Spanish with a "C" average or better comprised the experimental group. This group participated in a total Spanish immersion program starting November 15, 1971 and ending June, 1972. A control group of equal number was randomly assigned, keeping in mind only the Spanish language-study background. In the experimental group, no one was a First Honor Student; none was on the highest stanine of her class. In the control group, three girls were in the upper five per cent of their class; the others formed the normal %ile pattern of the experimental group.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE: All subjects in the experimental and control groups were students at Regina Dominican High School, a secondary girls school administered by the Sisters of St. Dominic. The school services the Chicago North Shore area and has a student body of approximately one thousand girls.

Data: Knowledge of Spanish was measured by:

Paul Pimsleur Tests on Comprehension, Speaking, Reading and Writing (Harcourt-Brace, 1968)

Modern Language Cooperative Foreign Language Tests Educational Testing Service (Princeton, New Jersey, 1963).

College Board Achievement Test, William Jassey, (Arc Books, New York, 1968).

LANGUAGE UNLIMITED, a language school (Dr. Hiram A. Crespo, Vice-president and director conducted aural-oral examinations as a part of the program

METHODOLOGY OF THE IMMERSION PROGRAM: Immersion Program used an audio-lingual approach in teaching volunteers to achieve proficiency in comprehension, speaking, reading and writing the Spanish language. Intensive daily practice in small classes assured that authentic language patterns were over-learned to the point of automatic control. Memorization of dialogs reinforced the control and increased vocabulary. Oral drills were conducted collectively and individually in classroom and language laboratory. Audio-visuals formed an important part of practice patterns.

The course attempted to prepare students to become proficient in general Spanish conversational situations and to read on the same general level.

Emphasis was maintained on spoken language but each course within the immersion program had its specific behavioral objectives. Reading and comprehension skills were developed as an integral part of the program.

The priorities, however, based on the DEFENSE LANGUAGE PROGRAM, called for the learning sequence of listening, comprehension and speaking, first; then, reading and writing. An attempt was made to present the Spanish language at the normal rate of speed and with normal rhythm and intonation.

Contemporary cultural authenticity was assured through the use of current periodicals, radio broadcasts, movies, books, filmstrips, synchroseries and daily newspapers.

An intense schedule of concentration on one central objective--Spanish Language Mastery --was the distinctive feature of the program over a one-Spanish class-a-day prevalent in secondary schools.

Individualization, a common denominator of modern educators was underplayed as small situations, rather than one-to-one ratio or large groups, seemed best. The number of students in a class varied from two to ten. The average was seven.

Grammar, per se, in spite of many audio-lingual proponent's disapproval, had a specific role in the program. The student learned certain fixed structures in the language: person and number, agreements of gender, negatives, tenses, moods, etc.

INSTRUCTORS: Teachers were members of a team who met regularly, cooperated in every phase of learning activities in order to assure that the immediate objectives were focused on the over-all objective of the course. Teachers were enthusiastic, and conscientious, ready to sacrifice time and effort. Motivation was such an important role that teachers and students both were noticeably enthusiastic and radiated happiness throughout the entire period of experimentation. Small classes, motivated, dedicated faculty caused warm, friendly individual remediation.

LANGUAGE LABORATORY: Included all forms of teaching aids. Material was properly synchronized with classroom learning. Monitors assisted students through immediate individual correction. Language Lab sessions were considered standard for the Immersion Group.

ANALYSIS OF TABLES ONE-TWO

RESULTS

MODERN LANGUAGE LISTENING TEST

The Modern Language Cooperative Foreign tests give norms which list the raw scores, converted scores, percentile bands and mit-per-centile ranks. This study tables the norms, gives the median score and charts the stanines into which each subject falls. The test is divided into LISTENING, SPEAKING, READING AND WRITING and the scores will be presented in that order. In LISTENING, the experimental group pre-tested to a median of 79%ile the control group had a median of 80%ile. The post-test gives the control group a median of 85%ile and the experimental groups, 95%ile. Further interpretation shows the stanines into which the groups fall:

	Experimental		Control	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test-	Post-test
Stanine	Subject	Subject	Subject	Subject
1	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	3	1
4	0	0	0	1
5	1	0	1	0
6	0	0	1	2
7	6	1	2	2
8	2	0	2	3
9	5	13	5	5

In LISTENING all but one of the experimental group fell into the ninth stanine, proof that intensive listening daily yields intensive listening skills. Table I supports these findings.

TABLE ONE

	Pre-test				Post-test			
	MLA Spanish Listening				Experimental Group			
Subject	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%
1	26	160-161	70-85	76	33	168-169	85-94	90
2	26	160-161	70-85	76	35	170-171	88-94	92
3	34	170-171	90-96	94	47	182-183	96-99.9	99
4	27	158-159	70-85	76	37	174-175	92-96	94
5	20	152-153	36-70	52	25	158-159	62-82	72
6	25	158-159	62-82	72	38	174-175	92-96	94
7	29	164-165	76-90	85	38	174-175	92-96	94
8	25	158-159	62-82	72	48	182-183	97-99	99
9	32	168-169	85-94	90	39	176-177	94-99	96
10	23	156-157	52-76	70	34	170-171	88-94	92
11	37	174-175	92-96	94	42	180-181	96-99	97
12	32	166-167	82-92	88	35	170-171	88-94	92
13	45	186-187		99.9	47	184-185	96-99.9	99
14	36	172-173	90-96	94	40	176-177	94-97	96
			Median 80				Median 95	

TABLE TWO

	Pre-test				Post-test			
	MLA Spanish Listening				Control Group			
Subject	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%
1	16	148-149	22-52	36	18	150-151	35-62	46
2	29	164-165	76-90	85	35	170-171	88.94	92
3	37	174-175	92-96	94	39	176-177	94-97	96
4	17	148-149	22-52	36	22	154-155	46-72	62
5	36	172-173	90-96	94	38	176-177	94-97	96
6	35	170-171	88-94	92	43	180-181	96-99	97
7	20	152-153	36-70	52	27	160-161	70-85	76
8	21	154-155	46-72	62	29	164-165	76-90	85
9	28	162-163	72-88	82	29	164-165	76-90	85
10	27	160-161	70-85	76	23	154-155	46-72	62
11	32	168-169	85-94	90	32	166-167	82-92	88
12	15	146-147	12-46	35	17	148-149	22-52	36
13	24	158-159	62-82	72	26	160-161	70-85	72
14	35	172-173	90-96	94	35	172-173	90-96	94
			Median 79				Median 85	

ANALYSIS OF TABLES THREE-FOUR

RESULTS

MODERN LANGUAGE SPEAKING TEST

Results in the MLA Speaking test are rather subjective since the raters disagree somewhat on the subject's ability in mimicry, reading, stress and accuracy of pronunciation, natural word grouping, approximation of a native, rhythm and intonation, vocabulary and interpretation of a picture. The ratings were scored from "Close approximation" to "Not attempted". Each category was given a numerical value and the scores tabulated. The experimental group was pretested at a median of 72%ile and reached 90%ile. The control group protested at 69%ile and reached a 74%ile median. Stanines in the Speaking category are:

	Experimental		Control	
Stanine	Pre-Test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
1	0	0	0	0
2	2	0	2	0
3	0	0	1	2
4	1	2	3	1
5	3	0	1	3
6	1	0	2	1
7	5	0	3	1
8	1	5	1	4
9	1	7	1	2

In SPEAKING, twelve of the experimental group reached or exceeded the eight stanine whereas half that number in the control group reached that goal.

TABLE THREE

	Pre-test				Post-test			
	MLA Spanish Speaking				Experimental Group			
Subject	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%
1	44	168-169	45-78	57	57	178-179	78-79	88
2	46	170-171	45-79	69	56	178-179	78-97	88
3	55	178-179	78-97	88	74	190-191		99
4	44	168-169	45-78	57	53	176-177	74-91	84
5	36	156-157	9-41	29	37	166-167	41-74	48
6	41	164-165	34-69	45	54	176-177	74-91	84
7	49	172-173	48-84	74	60	180-181	79-97	91
8	52	174-175	69-90	78	61	180-181	79-97	91
9	48	172-173	48-84	74	64	182-183	84-98	95
10	33	154-155	9-34	21	43	166-167	41-74	48
11	51	174-175	69-90	78	70	186-187	91-99	97
12	44	168-169	45-78	57	55	178-179	78-97	88
13	68	186-187	91-99	97	77	192-193		99
14	49	172-173	48-84	74	70	186-187	91-99	97
		Median	72				Median	90

TABLE FOUR

	Pre-test				Post-test			
	MLA Spanish Speaking				Control Group			
Subject	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%
1	38	158-159	19-45	34	40	162-163	29-48	41
2	46	170-171	45-79	69	48	172-173	44-84	74
3	57	178-179	78-97	88	60	180-181	79-97	91
4	39	160-161	21-45	41	44	168-169	45-78	57
5	49	172-173	48-84	74	56	178-179	78-97	88
6	60	180-181	78-97	91	64	182-183	84-98	95
7	46	170-171	45-79	69	48	172-173	45-79	74
8	42	166-167	41-74	48	45	168-169	45-70	57
9	47	170-171	45-79	69	54	176-177	74-91	84
10	34	154-155	9-34	21	38	158-159	19-45	34
11	51	174-175	69-90	78	57	178-179	78-97	88
12	35	156-157	9-41	29	38	158-159	19-45	34
13	39	160-161	21-45	41	45	168-169	45-78	57
14	48	172-173	48-84	74	54	176-177	74-91	84
			Median	69			Median	74

ANALYSIS OF TABLES FIVE-SIX

RESULTS

MODERN LANGUAGE READING TESTS

Tables Five and Six show the results of the reading examinations of both experimental and control groups in Reading. The first named group pretested at 85%ile and reached the 95th percentile; the second group went from a median of 70%ile to 82%ile. These scores represent the answers to factual questions in reading and comprehension and should be completely objective. The stanines for this test follow:

	Experimental		Control	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Stanine	Subject	Subject	Subject	Subject
1	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0
3	2	0	3	2
4	0	0	1	0
5	1	0	1	0
6	1	2	0	2
7	2	0	3	3
8	7	1	3	3
9	1	11	3	4

Eleven of the experimental group reached the ninth stanine as compared with four in the control group. Subjects in the former course had a daily schedule of literature; the others had the course as part of a one-hour a day Spanish class. The original hypothetical thinking was that the control group would compare favorably in the reading category. This did not prove to be true.

TABLE FIVE

	Pre-test				Post-test			
	MLA Spanish Reading				Experimental Group			
Subject	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%
1	16	146-147	15-48	31	24	156-157	53-77	65
2	32	164-165	77-89	85	42	176-177	92-98	95
3	33	166-167	82-90	86	47	182-183	97-99.9	99
4	27	158-159	59-82	71	43	176-177	92-98	95
5	30	162-163	71-86	82	32	164-165	77-89	85
6	25	156-157	53-77	65	37	170-171	86-94	90
7	22	152-153	37-65	53	46	180-181	95-99.9	98
8	31	164-165	77-89	85	48	182-183	97-99.9	99
9	30	162-163	71-86	82	43	176-177	92-98	95
10	18	148-149	19-53	37	25	156-157	53-77	65
11	31	164-165	77-89	85	47	182-183	97-99.9	99
12	31	164-165	77-89	85	38	170-171	86-94	90
13	48	182-183	97-99.9	99	47	184-185	97-99.9	99
14	27	158-159	59-82	71	45	178-179	94-98.7	97
			Median	82			Median	95

TABLE SIX

	Pre-test				Post-test			
	MLA Spanish Reading				Control Group			
Subject	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%
1	16	146-147	15-48	31	19	148-149	19-53	37
2	30	162-163	71-86	82	35	168-169	85-92	89
3	45	178-179	94-99	97	42	176-177	92-98	95
4	20	150-151	31-59	48	25	156-157	53-77	65
5	37	170-171	86-94	90	42	176-177	92-98	95
6	41	174-175	90-97	94	41	174-175	90-97	94
7	27	158-159	59-82	71	31	162-163	71-86	82
8	33	166-167	82-90	86	36	168-169	85-92	89
9	37	170-171	86-94	90	31	162-163	71-86	82
10	27	158-159	59-82	71	29	160-161	65-85	77
11	28	160-161	65-85	77	31	162-163	71-86	82
12	16	146-147	15-48	31	19	148-149	19-53	37
13	24	154-155	48-71	59	26	160-161	70-85	76
14	36	168-169	85-92	83	38	170-171	86-94	90
			Median 79				Median 82	

ANALYSIS OF TABLES SEVEN-EIGHT

RESULTS

MODERN LANGUAGE WRITING TEST

Since there was no Writing course, per se, it was not expected that the net gain of the Experimental Group would compare with that of Listening and Speaking. However, the experimental group went from a median of 71%ile to 76%ile while the experimental group went from 72%ile to 91%ile. Ten of the subjects reached the 9th stanine whereas only two of the control group reached that peak. Stanines follow:

	Experimental		Control	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Stanine	Subject	Subject	Subject	Subject
1	2	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	2	1
4	0	0	0	1
5	2	2	4	2
6	1	1	1	2
7	3	0	3	3
8	2	1	4	3
9	4	10	0	2

TABLE SEVEN

Pre-test — Post-test

MLA Spanish Writing — Experimental Group

Subject	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%
1	11	138-139	4-13	7	44	152-153	42-57	51
2	61	160-161	69-80	72	77	166-167	88-95	91
3	84	170-171	95-97	97	91	172-173	97-99	97
4	56	158-159	63-72	69	75	166-167	88-95	91
5	41	152-153	42-57	51	56	158-159	63-72	69
6	49	154-155	51-63	57	68	162-163	72-88	80
7	75	166-167	88-95	91	84	170-171	95-97	97
8	60	160-161	69-80	72	76	166-167	88-95	91
9	60	160-161	69-80	72	79	168-169	91-97	95
10	21	142-143	13-24	17	48	154-155	51-63	57
11	72	164-165	80-91	88	86	170-171	95-97	97
12	67	162-163	72-88	80	78	166-167	88-95	91
13	100	176-177		99.9	98	176-177		99.9
14	80	168-169	91-97	95	91	172-173	97-99	97

Median 72 — Median 91

TABLE EIGHT

	Pre-test				Post-test			
	MLA Spanish Writing				Control Group			
Subject	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%	Raw Score	Converted Score	%ile Band	%
1	28	146-147	24-39	32	41	150-151	39-51	42
2	60	160-161	69-80	72	68	162-163	72-88	80
3	68	164-165	80-91	88	70	164-165	80-91	88
4	46	154-155	51-63	57	55	156-157	57-69	63
5	74	164-165	80-91	88	81	168-169	91-97	95
6	63	160-161	69-80	72	78	166-167	88-95	91
7	43	152-153	42-57	51	50	154-155	51-63	57
8	57	158-159	63-72	69	61	160-161	69-80	72
9	63	160-161	69-80	72	68	162-163	72-88	80
10	47	154-155	51-63	57	50	154-155	51-63	57
11	65	162-163	72-88	80	71	164-165	80-91	88
12	19	148-149	19-53	37	35	148-149	32-42	39
13	46	154-155	51-63	57	51	156-157	57-69	63
14	66	162-163	72-	80	71	164-165	80-91	88
		Median 71				Median 76		

Pimsleur Spanish Proficiency Tests were recommended by the projector because the author of the tests recognizes, with the project administrator, that emphasis on a second language for communication purposes has brought about extensive change in foreign language methodology and, as a result, an increased awareness of the need for frequent reappraisal of the language curriculum. The tests provide objective materials by means of which the teacher may evaluate the outcome of planned instructional experiences in the field of foreign languages. Profile results from this set of tests proves the worth of an immersion course in Spanish. Both groups pretested at a 78% median; the experimental group posttested at 92; the control, at 81. Seven in the first group rated in the ninth stanine; one, in the control group.

Results of the tests follow:

Subject	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP				CONTROL GROUP			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	%ile	St.	%ile	st.	%ile	st.	%ile	st.
1	26	3	76	6	41	5	49	6
2	73	6	86	8	62	6	78	7
3	98	9	99	9	91	8	93	8
4	78	7	93	9	78	7	86	8
5	49	5	49	5	78	7	89	8
6	55	5	78	8	95	8	97	9
7	93	8	91	8	73	6	55	5
8	95	8	99	9	78	7	78	7
9	78	7	98	9	62	6	95	8
10	26	2	55	5	5	2	41	5
11	96	9	99	9	78	7	86	7
12	33	3	68	7	15	4	33	4
13	99	9	99	9	89	8	89	8
14	78	7	99	9	86	7	89	8

Pretest medians on all tests are relatively high. On a survey conducted prior to North Central evaluation at the home school of this project, each individual age group (Grades 9-10-11-12)rated a median between 85-88 on National Tests, 35 points higher than the national median. The population of the school warrants higher medians.

The College Board Entrance Examinations consist of the following parts:

1. Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)
2. Achievement Test (ACH)

Achievement tests are given on many subjects including Spanish Language. Besides a written test of verbal ability, there is a supplementary for SPANISH LISTENING COMPREHENSION. To help students prepare for the tests, William Jassey, Ed.D has authored College Board Achievement, Spanish, Arc Books, inc. c1968. The percentile rankings do not carry the validity of our other tests since they are compiled for all Spanish-language students regardless of whether they are preliminary or advanced students. They do serve a good purpose, however, since they show the relative degree of progress each group made. Results of College Board Tests follow:

	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
Subject	Pretest %ile	Posttest	Pretest %ile	Posttest
1	26	44	30	35
2	38	55	48	52
3	64	90	65	75
4	47	57	38	51
5	38	55	49	67
6	43	60	50	66
7	55	63	40	53
8.	56	68	57	61
9	49	83	48	51
10	31	50	33	45
11	47	93	33	45
12	51	69	23	36
13	79	91	47	61
14	51	89	59	62

Both groups pretested at a forty-eight percentile. Experimental group reached a sixty-seven percentile whereas the control group posttested at a fifty-four percentile.

CONCLUSIONS

To enable the administrator of the program to draw subjective conclusions from the pen of those deeply involved in the program, each student was asked to prepare an evaluation. No format was given. Excerpts from student evaluations are drawn and one complete paper presented. Following that are abstracts from the teachers involved and one complete paper which deals specifically with the literature and conversation courses but which gives a good over-all picture of the program.

Notes from Student Evaluations

Program in Spanish Immersion forced me to think in Spanish and relate to others in the language...my future, a high school Spanish teacher.. Northeastern College offered me credits for four Spanish courses... highly recommend the program...wonderful Spanish experience...appreciate patience each teacher exercised to help individuals...enthusiasm lasted about three months and then slacked off...several interesting field trips...excellent speakers...classes so very small that everyone receives individual attention...good program which should be adopted in more schools...became boring because I don't like to do the same thing all the time...became monotonous because of the constant memorizing and exercises...not enough field trips...if immersion is repeated it will be a great success...I had only one year of high school Spanish prior to the immersion program and felt advanced students would profit more than I! I was wrong...Spanish speaking significantly improved... fantastic opportunity to prepare girls for college life...responsibility was encouraged...atmosphere very open and somewhat unstructured... Conversational class and literature most beneficial...rapport of students and teachers one of respect and friendliness...grammar class a good experience for Writing...social problems could have had more angles to it-like tutoring Spanish-speaking children...beneficial experience to me academically and socially...learned much more than if I had been in a regular Spanish class...taught me how to get along with people as we grew to love one another in a very special way... met teachers on a personal level...glad I had a chance to experience this successful program...stimulation lost in time...not enough field trips...on the whole successful...with the exception of learning to read and write, Spanish Immersion has been my greatest learning experience...good teachers...students with minds set to learn to speak Spanish...fantastic success...we can communicate...pilot program successful beyond our expectations...tried our hardest to make the program work...we became a very closely knit people and really enjoyed being together day in and day out...because of the friendly and relaxed atmosphere I believe all of us have gained much from IMMERSION.

A typical evaluation - student

Spanish Immersion has been a great experience for me. I have benefited from this program in many other areas besides just being able

to converse in Spanish. The cultural aspect was of great interest to me and I have been exposed to this through various subjects such as: Literature, Social problems, Conversation, Grammar and Programmatics. I have a better understanding of the Spanish people and as an indirect result, I am able to speak better.

The opportunity to work with the same fourteen girls throughout the program was wonderful. Each of us has grown to know each other in a more personal way than other classroom situations afford. We all try to help one another and are eager for the other's happiness and success. Pettiness does not exist among us.

I feel we could have had more speakers and field trips. They were beneficial because they made us more aware of the Spanish culture in ways that cannot be taught in a classroom.

I am happy to have had the opportunity to experience this program. I plan to major in Spanish in college. Since my placement test results were so high, my college is giving me twelve semester hours towards my degree.

Notes from Teacher Evaluations

Principles of grammar gave students thorough familiarity needed for spontaneous communication either in writing or speaking...more compositions should have been assigned...student diary an effective nongraded method to help the student in her writing skill...various levels of competency imposed individuality in the grammar course... improvement evident and encouraging...social problesm provided listening, speaking and reading in the cultural aspects of language learning...speakers came from many agencies in Chicago and the North Shore...current magazines and newspapers, broadcasts and movies were regular tools of learning...programmatic course had simplicity and clarity of presentation...great progress and high quality performance ...minimum useful level of proficiency attained...authentic experience in Spanish...thoroughly stimulating teaching experience...teacher-student rapport excellent...most dedicated faculty and students...

A typical evaluation-teacher

To be placed in charge of the Conversation and Literature classes of the Spanish Immersion program posed a number of challenges. Would working with the same girls day in and day out create any special problems among the students? Would boredom set in when the novelty of the first weeks ended? At the end of the program, would the students have obtained that degree of fluency which is hardly ever attained after a regular four-year program? Would it be realistic to embark on a Literature course which aimed at surveying from the beginnings of the Spanish people to contempory times?

In the literature course, the first step taken was to place the learner in the geographical, historical and philosophical circumstances of the Iberian Peninsula in order to minimize or perhaps avoid the tendency of the students to apply their own cultural standards to works stemming from a different tradition. No single textbook was used, but multimedia was prepared by the teacher.

After studying the early invasions and wars in the peninsula, literary movements were studied by centuries. Emphasis was always placed in pointing out events and literary works which served best to demonstrate the close ties that exist between the history and the literature of a nation. Students learned that if indeed, history makes literature, it is also important to consider literature as a source of facts, characters, customs and traditions about which there might not be at times, any historical document.

Representative works of outstanding authors of each period were introduced, and excerpts of some of these productions were analyzed. Characteristics of the main literary currents were taught comparing and contrasting their manifestation in Spain and other countries such as Italy and France. A contemporary play was read and discussed.

Judging from test evaluation, personal observation, and the reaction of participating students, the results may be considered very successful. The students have acquired a broad knowledge of Spanish literature and a good foundation for college work. But perhaps the most valuable consequence has been the maturity that they have gained as shown by their understanding and tolerance of other people's attitudes.

In the conversation course, the students were first asked, in Spanish, questions that dealt with matter relative to their own life. Aside from individual weaknesses, two major weaknesses were identified: a limited vocabulary and a tendency to misuse tenses and moods.

A basic textbook was used which lent itself to much variety in topics which assured continuity. Based therein individual lists were made of vocabulary that was new to each student.

Throughout the course, and choosing most of the topics suggested in the textbook, students participated in many group discussions, at which time emphasis was placed on the correct use of tenses and moods. Each girl had several opportunities to make oral presentations based on previous reading of stories in English, such as those published in the Reader's Digest. At times, the reading of the story would be an assignment for the whole class, and after the individual presentation in Spanish all were to comment on it. Other times, the reading would be assigned only to the student who would make the presentation, and a check would be made on the others for comprehension. In each case, the teacher made a list of errors and made corrections at the end of the talk.

Debates, letter-writing, and written composition were also a part of

the course. Always some time was reserved for grammar review and vocabulary practice. At the end of the conversation course, it was a joy to hear presentations that could be easily understood without previous knowledge of the material by the listeners, and it was a source of satisfaction to hear students communicating in Spanish with greater ease than their counterparts in a conventional program and with practically no inhibitions. For the most part, the students maintained their original interest, and the close relationship of the small group admittedly served to make the girls eager for the others' happiness and success.

Success of the course could perhaps be best expressed by quoting the words of a student which were later echoed by others, "I think I'm totally immersed. Last night I dreamt in Spanish."

RECOMMENDATIONS

The hypothesis was established that under the conditions proposed and executed, the experimental group in Spanish Immersion would outgain the control group in language competency. All objective and subjective data support the thesis. Many factors that contributed to the success of the program are completely desirable, but not always attainable. Small, small classes, competent and dedicated teachers, administrative encouragement, separate learning facilities, fully equipped language laboratories, individual listening machines, short-wave radio, sixteen millimeter projector, are not part and parcel of everyone's learning experience. These features,coupled with a full day Spanish language semester, produced girls who can communicate in a foreign language. In evaluating the relevancy of a foreign language program, Caesar S. Kerston and Vesperella E. Ott state:

> ...to have a student struggle through several classics and remain speechless when he is asked the simplest question in a foreign language is an absurdity...a functional program should give the student a working knowledge of the language so that he finds pleasure and satisfaction in using it for communication... this is the only category of foreign study which will justify the time, effort and expense involved in offering language courses at the secondary school level.

Since we believe that the only way to develop language competency is to teach the student to communicate in the given language, we recommend a semester of total-immersion or semi-immersion at the secondary level.

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